Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6939
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL PARIS 29466

E. O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, TW

SUBJECT: AIRBUS/LANDING RIGHTS

REF: (A) PARIS 29293; (B) STATE 222137; (C) TAIPEI 5933.

1. ON SEPTEMBER 5 CIVIL AIR ATTACHE RAISED TAIWAN QUESTION AGAIN WITH FRANCOISE CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE (DIREC-TOR OF AVIATION AT THE QUAI D'ORSAY) IN THE AFTERMATH OF MINECON'S SEPTEMBER 1 CONVERSATION WITH FROMENT-MEURICE WHO IS NOW IN THE UNITED STATES. WE REVIEWED POINTS PARA SIX REF. B. IN TURN, CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE READ TO US FROM A CABLE SHE HAD JUST SENT FROMENT-MEURICE IN NEW YORK REVIEWING THE SITUATION, FOR USE IN ANY DISCUSSIONS HE MIGHT HAVE WITH USG OFFICIALS. THE TELEGRAM STATED THAT AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE PURCHASE OF AIRBUSSES HAD BEEN SIGNED IN JULY BETWEEN AIRBUS INDUSTRIES AND CHINA AIRLINES AND THAT THERE SPECIFICALLY WAS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN THAT SALE AND THE GRANTING OF ANY LANDING RIGHTS TO CHINA AIRLINES IN FRANCE (SHE REASSERTED THAT GRANTING SUCH RIGHTS WOULD BE IN OPPOSITION TO FRENCH POLICY RE TAIWAN AND CHINA.) CONFIDENTIAL

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THE TELEGRAM ALSO INFORMED FROMENT-MEURICE THAT FRANCE'S INDEPENDENT AIRLINE, UTA (WHICH OPERATES IN THE PACIFIC), HAD BEEN FIRMLY INSTRUCTED NOT TO COMMENCE OPERATIONS TO TAIWAN. UTA HAS BEEN WANTING TO DO THIS FOR SOME TIME AND HAS RECENTLY BEEN ACTIVELY PRESSING THE ISSUE. THIS INSTRUCTION TO UTA, SHE NOTED, WAS BASED ON A PERSONAL DECISION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE

REPUBLIC HIMSELF.

2. WE THANKED CLAUDE-LAFONTAINE FOR THIS INFORMATION AND NOTED THAT IT WAS QUITE CONSISTENT WITH WHAT SHE AND HER CHIEF (DESEDOUY) HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD US. HOWEVER, WE ADDED THAT IT WAS QUITE APPARENT THAT HIGH LEVEL ROC OFFICIALS BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS A CONNECTION BETWEEN CAL'S PURCHASE OF THESE AIRCRAFT AND LANDING RIGHTS IN FRANCE. SHE THEN TOOK REFUGE BEHIND THE IDEA THAT AIRBUS INDUSTRIES IS A FRANCO-GERMAN PRIVATE CONSORTIUM AND SAID THAT THE GOF COULD NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANYTHING AIRBUS OFFICIALS HAD TOLD CAL IF THEY HAD DONE SO AT ALL. WE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH ASSURANCES BY AIRBUS MIGHT BE EMBARRASSING TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AS THEY WOULD BE CONTRATICTORY TO THE FRENCH POLICY SHE AND OTHERS HAD DESCRIBED. WE WONDERED IF FRANCE HAD ANY PLANS TO STATE PUBLICLY WHAT HAD BEEN TOLD US. SHE

REPLIED THAT FRANCE WAS NOT IN THE LEAST EMBARRASSED BY ANY SUCH STATEMENTS AS AFTER ALL PEKING WAS NOT BRINGING THE MATTER TO THE GOF'S ATTENTION AND THEREFORE FRANCE WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO SAY PUBLICLY ABOUT THIS ALLEGED LINKAGE. NOR WOULD IT COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THE ROC. HOWEVER, SHE ADDED THAT SINCE IT IS THE UNITED STATES WHICH IS SO CONCERNED THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION IF WE WERE TO TELL THE GOC WHAT FRANCE HAS TOLD US. CONFIDENTIAL

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3. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT CONVINCED WE ARE GOING TO GET ANYTHING MORE FROM THE FRENCH ON THIS ALLEGED LINKAGE AND WE DO SUGGEST THAT EMBASSY TAIWAN CONVEY THIS AND PREVIOUS STATEMENTS OF THE FRENCH POSITION TO THE ROC. HARTMAN

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